

## **Coral Disease and Health Consortium (CDHC)**

The National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and the Department of Interior (DOI) developed the framework for the CDHC for the United States Coral Reef Task Force through an interagency effort in March 2000. The Coral Reef Task Force was established by Executive Order in June 1998 (Executive Order 13089 on the Protection of Coral Reefs) to help preserve and protect the biodiversity, health, heritage, and social and economic value of U.S. coral reef ecosystems. The purpose of the CDHC is to organize and coordinate the scientific resources of the United States and its territories to document the condition of coral reef ecosystems, determine causes of declines in coral reef health, and provide technical information and assistance to managers and scientists regarding coral reef health. The CDHC is a network of over 150 national and international partners, including U.S. federal (EPA, DOI, NOAA) and state agencies, academia, non-profit groups and industry representing field and laboratory scientists, health professionals, coral reef managers, and agency representatives devoted to understanding coral health and disease. It is extensive, highly collaborative, and completely voluntary. Members share information and ideas and contribute their time and expertise for a common set of goals *to understand and address the effects of natural and anthropogenic stressors on corals in order to contribute to the preservation and protection of coral reef ecosystems.*

The CDHC has been working closely with our partners to assist in addressing the key goals and objectives related to coral health and disease issues. Five thematic areas have been identified as key areas of focus:

- Establishing diagnostic criteria and diagnostic tool development
- Conducting mechanism-based research on coral health and disease
- Web-based communication and distance learning tool development
- Capacity building among the community through training and continuing education
- Coral Disease Outbreak Investigations - Leading outbreak investigation training efforts and providing assistance in outbreak responses

Through these objectives, the CDHC aims to significantly enhance current assessments of coral health, reproduction and fitness; improve the effectiveness of management decisions by providing early warning of disease and disease outbreaks; identify putative causative factors and possible prevention and mitigation strategies; and offer managers viable risk management options.

For information: [CDHC.Coral@noaa.gov](mailto:CDHC.Coral@noaa.gov)

Website: [www.cdhc.noaa.gov](http://www.cdhc.noaa.gov)

### **NOAA Contact:**

Cheryl Woodley  
Protected Areas & Resources Branch  
Center for Coastal Environmental Health and Biomolecular Research  
National Centers for Coastal Ocean Science  
Phone: 843-762-8862  
Email: [Cheryl.woodley@noaa.gov](mailto:Cheryl.woodley@noaa.gov)